

A cycle route on Walter Road

Introduction

Options for cycle lanes on Walter Road between Page Street (to the east) and Uplands were discussed at a CAP meeting on 16 October 2018. Drawings showing two options were tabled: one with cycle lanes on both sides and the other with a lane on the north (downhill) side only. Ryland Jones advised at the meeting that the former would not meet Active Travel guidelines due to the lanes being 1.5m and there being insufficient width for wider lanes. The 1.8m width of the single lane option would be sufficient; however the view was expressed by several that it would be better for this lane to be on the uphill (south) side of the road rather than the downhill. A single uphill cycle lane was preferred because traffic would not be held up overtaking slow moving cyclists whereas on the downhill side faster cyclists would cause little hold up.

After the meeting Nick Guy, Ryland Jones and the writer visited Walter Road on foot to review the options. This brief report covers that visit. The original draft has been revised following a subsequent meeting of Wheelrights Routes Group.

Observations

We noted that there was approximately the same amount of parking space on either side of Walter Road. On both sides this is interrupted by 8 crossings. It would appear therefore that if parking is to be restricted to one side which is chosen would have little if any effect on the amount of parking space available.



We noted that if parking was provided on the same side as a cycle lane (as shown on the plan above) a buffer between the footway and the cycle lane would be needed to safeguard cyclists from 'dooring'. (A buffer is shown on the Council drawing for the single lane option.)

We noted that the traffic islands (X's on the plan) would interrupt the cycle lane(s), continuity of which we felt important. We thought that replacement of these by single stage crossings would allow both continuity and the free movement of traffic.

Active Travel guidelines require cycle lanes to be at least 2m wide where they cross side roads (DE 019). As there are several of these it would make sense for 2m to apply throughout. To fit in two lanes it would seem that the footway would need to be narrowed on one or both sides of at least part of Walter Rd.

Irrespective of whether there are cycle lanes on one or both sides there is a case for restricting parking to the uphill (south) side. This is because 'dooring' would then be less of a hazard since people cycle more slowly uphill. Even so a buffer should be provided between the parked vehicles and the cycle lane.

A problem with a cycle lane on a side where there is no (official) parking is that it will most likely get blocked. This suggests that, paradoxically on safety grounds, a north side lane with parking alongside should be avoided unless measures are taken to ensure it does not get blocked. This strengthens the case, made at the CAP meeting, for a single uphill lane with adjacent parking.

Recommendations

- A single one way cycle lane should be provided on the uphill (south) side.
- Parking should be restricted to this side.
- The cycle lane should be at least 2m wide.
- The traffic islands should be replaced by single stage crossings.



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November 2018